

## Wrath 561

Chapter 561:

“Why is everyone so hyped about the men? Isn’t anyone excited for the women? Personally, I’m just here waiting for Janice to show up.”

The viewers were abuzz with anticipation and excitement.

The live chat exploded with comments, and some viewers even started sending extravagant virtual gifts, pushing the stream’s popularity through the roof.

Devin couldn’t help but smile to himself, thinking that this was a brilliant decision. The pool, without a doubt, was the perfect spot to spark excitement for both men and women.

The production team had taken care of organizing swimsuits for all the guests. Janice browsed through the options, but none of the designs or styles suited her taste.

Bikinis dominated the women’s selection, while oversized shorts dominated the men’s. Janice had hoped for a more modest choice, but Maggie had already snagged it.

Frustrated, she gave up searching and retreated to her room.

Grabbing a T-shirt and capri pants, she fetched a pair of scissors, transforming the casual outfit into a makeshift swimsuit.

Thanks to her knack for creativity and a sharp sense of style, she could effortlessly convert a plain T-shirt and capri pants into a chic summer swimsuit.

Earlier, when she returned to her room, she hadn’t shut the door all the way, leaving it slightly open. Out of the corner of her eye, she noticed someone walking past.

“Stephen?”

Stephen's room was on the second floor, right next to hers, so it wasn't unusual for him to pass by.

However, her attention was drawn to the T-shirt and oversized shorts he was carrying.

Aiden and Kenneth opted for just shorts, skipping shirts entirely to reduce water drag for the upcoming match, so why was Stephen carrying a shirt?

Something about it felt off, especially with the memory of last night's dream still lingering in her thoughts.

Driven by curiosity and a need for answers, Janice stepped out and made her way to Stephen's door.

She tapped lightly on the door, and a few moments later, it creaked open.

"Janice, can I help you with something?" Stephen stood at the entrance, his expression laced with mild confusion as he looked at her.

"Oh, nothing serious. I was just curious. Have you changed into your swimsuit yet?" Janice said with a bright smile, doing her best to sound casual.

"I might need a little more time."

"Would you like some help with that?" Janice didn't miss the quick flash of panic in Stephen's eyes.

"It's just changing, no assistance needed." Stephen managed to answer without awkwardness, despite the odd nature of Janice's question.

"Stephen, I think you misunderstood." Janice smiled, her tone steady. "I noticed the swimwear provided might not fit perfectly. If yours is too loose, I can tailor it for you."

Chapter 562:

Stephen looked a little surprised. "You know how to alter clothes?"

"I do. I picked up a bit of fashion design on my own some time ago." Leah would probably roll her eyes if she overheard this.

Janice, a renowned name in the fashion industry, downplaying her skills as "a bit"? That was a whole new level of humility.

"The swimsuits from the production team fit me just fine," Stephen replied.

"I see." Janice arched an eyebrow as Stephen stood firm by the door, refusing to step aside, making his stance crystal clear. Still, she showed no sign of backing down.

His behavior was growing more and more suspicious by the second.

It shouldn't take a man long to slip into swim trunks, yet Stephen stood there, tightly wrapped in a bathrobe, as though he was hiding something.

Something about his behavior set off alarm bells in Janice's mind.

Suddenly, Janice caught a faint scent in the air, her forehead creasing in response.

It was unmistakably the metallic scent of blood.

Her eyes narrowed, and she fixed Stephen with a look full of curiosity and concern.

"Janice, if that's all, I'll get back to..."

“Sure.” Janice gave him a small smile as if to leave, but in a swift motion, she pushed the door open and stepped inside.

Stephen’s eyes widened in shock, caught off guard by her sudden action. He staggered back, and in his panic, his foot slipped, sending him tumbling backward.

“Stephen!” Janice shouted, darting forward to grab him by the waist before he hit the floor.

In a moment that seemed straight out of a cliché rescue scene, the roles were humorously flipped, with Janice playing the savior.

Janice was filled with embarrassment and guilt. She hadn’t anticipated that her abrupt action would rattle Stephen this much.

Stephen winced sharply, a faint groan of pain slipping through his lips. “Are you hurt, Stephen?” Janice hurried to steady him, noticing how pale his face had turned, with his lips drained of color.

“I’m okay.” Stephen brushed her off with a dismissive wave, trying to create some distance.

But then his eyes landed on Janice, who stood frozen, staring at her hand. Her palm was covered in blood, a deep red stain. “Stephen, you’re bleeding?”

Stephen’s face grew even paler, his expression betraying panic, as if a hidden truth had been exposed.

“I’m fine. Please, go,” he insisted, attempting to usher Janice out of the room. However, Janice’s gaze hardened with resolve. She caught his hand and spun him around, her focus landing on his back.

The pristine white bathrobe was marred by red stains, and with her experience as a surgeon, Janice instantly recognized the telltale signs of blood from a fresh wound.

Chapter 563:

“Janice, leave now!” Stephen said, his voice cold and agitated.

Despite Stephen's growing hysteria, Janice remained calm, her expression composed as she asked, "Who hurt you?"

"No one hurt me; it was just an accident," Stephen replied, turning to grab Janice's hand, trying to lead her outside. "Please, you have to leave. I need a change."

Janice pulled her hand away, looking up at Stephen sharply. "You fell? How did you manage to get hurt so badly?"

Her nightmare from the previous night seemed less like a dream and more like a warning.

No wonder she had felt uneasy today. It turned out that Stephen was indeed injured, yet he hadn't told anyone and was suffering in silence.

"Janice, we're just acquaintances, and you're crossing a line." Stephen spoke in a steady voice, though his eyes revealed the anger he kept hidden behind a calm expression.

He instantly regretted his words.

His words were sharper than he meant them to be, but his thoughts were in disarray, and fear gripped him deeply.

He didn't want anyone to uncover his secret. It was his lifelong burden and shame.

His life had already fallen apart, and the small bit of dignity he still held on to was the only thing keeping him going. And he couldn't bear to lose that either.

Janice let out a chuckle. "I suppose I was being too nosy."

Stephen's expression softened as he looked at Janice with a mix of emotions.

Initially panicked and angry, he found his anger fading when he gazed into Janice's clear, bright eyes. A wave of guilt replaced his anger. "I know you're worried about me."

It was true, Janice was concerned for him.

He realized his earlier words had been too harsh. "I'm sorry. But I need you to leave now. And please, keep this between us."

Janice exhaled, her smile tinged with sadness. "Do you really think you can go on the show in this condition?"

"I know what I'm doing. Just keep this to yourself."

Janice stared at Stephen with a focused expression, clearly eager to know how he got injured.

However, Stephen's earlier demeanor had been unusual, and she sensed that pushing him further might break their friendship.

Remembering how Stephen had grabbed a T-shirt, she suspected it was to hide a wound on his back. While a T-shirt could hide the injury, if it got wet, the wound might become infected.

She was uncertain about the severity of Stephen's injury, but whether it was minor or serious, she felt it was too risky to ignore.

With a final look, Janice turned and left the room.

Stephen was momentarily surprised, then, having thought of something, he followed after her. "Janice."

Chapter 564:

“You were right before. I was interfering.” Janice paused, then turned to face Stephen with a determined look. “But I can’t help but interfere.”

Stephen looked at her, slightly confused by Janice’s words.

By then, Janice was already talking to the camera in the corridor. “Devin, I accidentally tripped Stephen earlier, and he fell. I’m worried he won’t be able to participate in the swimming contest.”

Devin was still enjoying the thrill of the high viewership on the live stream when Janice’s announcement caught him by surprise.

“What? Stephen is injured?”

“Yes, it seems he’s sprained his ankle. He might need some time to recover.”

“How could he have been so careless?” Devin frowned. The live stream’s audience was eagerly waiting for Stephen’s appearance.

He feared that if Stephen didn’t show up, he would face intense backlash from Stephen’s fans.

Furthermore, if these passionate fans found out about Stephen’s injury, they might pose a serious threat to the show.

Just as Stephen was about to step out and explain the situation to Devin, he caught Janice’s steady gaze.

He opened his mouth to speak but eventually chose to remain silent.

He knew Janice was trying to help him, but he couldn’t shake the discomfort of feeling indebted to her.

“Stephen is injured, but I know his fans would be upset if he doesn’t appear today. Here’s a solution. He can stay out of the water and simply serve as a referee from the sidelines,” Devin said.

“Thank you, Devin.” Janice recognized that this was a major sacrifice on Devin’s part.

The show was at the peak of its popularity, and any loss of control over the segments could easily result in chaos.

Janice then went back to Stephen’s room and shut the door.

“Stephen, if you want to keep this quiet, you’ll need to follow my plan,” she said.

Stephen turned to look at Janice, his face showing a mix of emotions. Despite Janice overstepping his personal boundaries, he found it hard to be angry with her.

“Why are you helping me?” he asked.

Janice was momentarily surprised. Why was she helping him? Of course, it was because he was her brother. But she couldn’t tell him right now.

“I find you quite likable. I help because it feels right.”

“That’s an unusual reason,” Stephen said, slightly distracted. “Alright, what do I need to do?”

“Just take off your bathrobe!”

Aiden didn’t go to the pool after changing into his swimwear. Instead, he headed toward Janice’s room.

Just as he stepped out, he saw Janice slipping into Stephen’s room, shutting the door behind her.

Chapter 565:

Aiden's brow furrowed, but he quickly brushed it off. He knew Janice and Stephen's relationship and trusted she wouldn't do anything rash. Still, Janice going to Stephen's room now meant it had to be something significant.

Aiden steadied himself and chose not to probe. He understood that sometimes, the best course of action was to stay calm and give Janice the space she needed.

"Aiden, what a coincidence." Alissa appeared, coming up from downstairs. She was wearing a black bikini that showcased her shapely figure, every inch of her seemingly made to draw every man's attention.

Yet Aiden showed no reaction. He barely glanced at her when he heard her voice. "Are you certain it's a coincidence?" he retorted, his gaze still fixed on Stephen's room. "This is the second floor."

Alissa's face stiffened for a moment, but she quickly regained her composure. "I just stepped out of my room and saw you here. Isn't that a bit of a coincidence?"

"Sorry, I don't see it like that. I just find it uncomfortable."

Alissa's expression hardened, her eyes sharp with ice. This guy really had no clue how to pick up on the atmosphere.

As a key member of the Welch family, she had gone out of her way to be kind to him. And instead of showing gratitude, he met her with that sour look? Did he actually think he was someone special?

If not for his talent and the compliments he'd earned from her father, she wouldn't have even considered speaking to him.

"Move," Aiden said coldly, his tone biting. Without waiting for her reply, he turned and walked downstairs with a hard face.

Alissa was shoved aside, her pride crumbling in the face of the man before her. She glanced at Aiden's back and took a deep breath. Her angry expression shifted to something more uncertain. "I actually kind of like your rebellious side. Maybe if I..."

"Manage to conquer someone as stubborn as you, and I'll finally feel like I've achieved something."

"Alissa," Delilah greeted, walking up to her. She always played the shy, meek role whenever she was around Alissa.

"What?" Alissa responded, her icy gaze directed at her.

"Actually, why are you settling for Aiden? With your qualities, you could have any man you want."

Just then, the sound of a sharp slap cut through the air as Alissa's hand met Delilah's cheek.

Delilah instinctively cupped her cheek, her eyes widening in shock.

"Who do you think you are to tell me what to do?" Alissa's expression was dismissive, as if Delilah were nothing more than an insignificant object. "You're nothing but a pawn in my game. Whether you live or die depends entirely on my mood."

Delilah trembled, quickly lowering her head in submission. "I was wrong. Please, give me another chance."

Alissa looked down at her with clear disdain. "If you want a chance, show me you're worth it. Otherwise..."

Chapter 566:

"I understand! I'll prove myself to you, I swear," Delilah hurriedly promised.

Alissa gave a mocking smile. "Now that's more like it."

She didn't have much faith in Delilah. The only reason she got Delilah out of prison was for Leonidas' sake.

For the Welch family, getting someone out of prison was nothing more than a small favor. With just a word from her, even the worst of criminals could be set free.

Alissa adjusted her posture, swaying her hips as she made her way down the stairs.

Delilah quickly stood and followed her.

"Alissa, if you want to win Aiden over, maybe you should dial it back a bit," Leonidas said quietly, standing downstairs. "A man like Aiden won't be swayed by your usual tactics."

Alissa furrowed her brows, ready to snap back, but Leonidas cut her off. "I can already guess what you're about to say. You're going to tell me not to tell you what to do, right? If you keep going after Aiden like this, he'll only be more repelled by you."

He tapped his head lightly. "Think for a second—why do you think Janice has Aiden so completely captivated?"

Alissa was momentarily caught off guard. It hadn't crossed her mind before.

"Alright, I'll think about it."

Leonidas gave a small smile. "We're partners, remember? Your win is my win."

Meanwhile, the atmosphere at the pool was heating up.

After Kenneth arrived, Liliana made her entrance.

Liliana's figure was perfectly balanced—not overly curvy, but radiating health and vitality.

She wore a blue bikini, and though it was undeniably sexy, the addition of a sheer white cover-up added an air of mystery and innocence.

“Liliana, your outfit is just gorgeous,” Maggie exclaimed, clearly impressed. “Why didn’t I think of that style?”

Liliana smiled subtly. “I’ve taught myself fashion design, so I’ve picked up a few styling tricks. That’s how I put this look together.”

“Make way for the genius herself!”

“Liliana is incredible! She’s good at everything. Could she even be a professional swimmer?”

“Just look at her figure—she definitely could be!”

Online viewers were blown away by Liliana’s many talents.

She had mastered cooking, dabbled in fashion design, and was a swimming pro on top of it all. Truly impressive!

Both the online viewers and Maggie were left in awe of Liliana’s versatility.

“Kenneth, you’ve studied design too, right?” Maggie laughed, pulling at his hand. “What do you think of Liliana’s outfit? Rate it for us.”

Kenneth, in the middle of his warm-up, was briefly interrupted by Maggie’s request. He looked at Liliana. His gaze was soft and respectful, as if he was simply admiring the outfit. “If I had to rate it, I’d give it an eight out of ten.”

Chapter 567:

“Wow, that’s pretty high,” Maggie said, fully aware of Kenneth’s tough standards when it came to aesthetics. Getting an eight from him was definitely something to be proud of.

“An eight? I’m pretty pleased with that,” Liliana said, smiling. “But I’m curious. What took away those two points?”

Kenneth laughed. “Your outfit looks fantastic—both the style and the color suit you. But the light blue of the pool and your swimsuit are similar, so you might blend in a little too much.”

Liliana’s expression stiffened as her gaze drifted to the nearby pool, which was indeed a light blue color.

She hadn’t thought about the setting before, and she accepted the conclusion with a nod. “As expected from you, your 8 out of 10 is right on the mark. After all, there’s no such thing as perfection, right?”

Kenneth shook his head, his eyes softening just a bit. “There is such a thing as perfection.”

“What?” Liliana was caught off guard, then leaned forward eagerly. “Are you telling me that perfection actually exists in this world?”

“Uh, how can I explain this?” Kenneth furrowed his brows, thinking for a moment. “To be precise, I just can’t find any flaws in that piece, at least not from my perspective.”

“Kenneth, please just tell us who made it.”

“If Kenneth says there’s no flaw, it must be perfect.”

“Do you think it might be Janice? She was a designer at Delgado Jewelry before.”

Suddenly, a wave of online viewers began searching through Janice’s past at Delgado Jewelry.

But no matter how thoroughly they searched, they couldn't find a single clue.

Any sensitive information about Janice had long been wiped clean by Prescott. Liliana's hands tightened into fists, her eyes narrowing as they fixed on Kenneth.

"So, who exactly made this flawless piece you consider perfect?"

Kenneth shook his head lightly. "Sometimes it's better not to overthink things. Just enjoy yourself."

For a moment, Liliana looked surprised, but then she brushed it off with a shrug. "If you don't take things seriously, how can you expect to get better? Like how you pointed out my mistake before, I won't let it happen again."

"How can you be so certain you won't repeat the same mistake?"

"I always learn from my mistakes."

Maggie shot a quick glance from Liliana to Kenneth. The vibe between them had been so light-hearted earlier. What had changed so suddenly?

"Did you catch that? Liliana's pretty competitive. She gets all worked up when someone outshines her."

"Come on! She's a genius. There's nothing wrong with a little pride and competitiveness."

"I think Kenneth was being a bit too picky. Who even considers the setting when choosing an outfit? That just feels like looking for a reason to complain. And when he talks about perfection, that's just his opinion, not some universal standard."

Chapter 568:

The exchange between Kenneth and Liliana ignited a whole debate online.

A lot of people backed Kenneth, agreeing with his critique, but others thought Liliana's outfit was nearly flawless and didn't deserve the criticism.

"Carlton, it seems like no one's even noticing us," Demi said, standing by the pool with a hint of frustration in her voice.

She had chosen the most daring, attention-grabbing outfit, hoping to be the center of everyone's gaze.

But despite being right there, no one seemed to notice her—not even Daniel.

"Demi, relax. Let's just be ourselves," Carlton said, his cheerful smile as radiant as ever. "Actually, you don't need to dress so provocatively. Something more modest and natural might suit you better."

Demi's smile faltered for a moment before she quickly forced it back into place. "I just put on this outfit randomly. You don't like it?"

"Yes, I do! It's just..." Carlton hesitated, a hint of possessiveness flashing in his eyes. "I don't want everyone staring at you."

Demi blinked, momentarily stunned into silence. Even though she had dressed this way, no one had spared her a second glance. If she put on something else, she might as well fade into the background.

"Are you jealous, Carlton?" she teased.

Carlton's face reddened, and he avoided Demi's gaze.

Demi's lips curved into a smile that didn't quite reach her eyes. If Carlton hadn't been the only male guest she could pair up with, she wouldn't have bothered smiling so brightly at him.

Neither Aiden, Kenneth, nor Daniel had given her a second glance. Was she really that invisible?

“Let’s warm up first, Demi.” Carlton rubbed his nose awkwardly, eager to change the subject.

Demi forced a strained smile, nodding reluctantly.

“Step aside!” Alissa strode over and shoved Demi, sending her splashing into the pool.

“Ah!” Demi shrieked, instinctively grabbing Carlton. Together, they tumbled into the water with a loud splash.

Alissa stood by the edge of the pool, glancing at the two of them, now drenched. Her tone was calm and unapologetic. “I told you to move. This isn’t my fault.”

“Alissa, that was deliberate!” Carlton barked, hauling Demi out of the water. “This pool’s massive, yet you had to come this way? Are you crazy?”

“Who are you calling crazy?” Alissa shot back, her eyes narrowing as she glared at Carlton. “You—”

“It’s fine, Carlton,” Demi cut in, her reddened eyes adding the perfect touch of vulnerability. “I just lost my balance. It wasn’t Alissa’s fault.”

“Demi, don’t be scared! I’ll stand up for you.” Carlton’s gallant declaration sent the stream viewers into a frenzy.

“Carlton’s so handsome!”

“Who would’ve guessed that the best chemistry would be between Carlton and Demi? His boyfriend vibes are absolutely on point!!”

Chapter 569:

“From this moment on, I’m officially the biggest fan of the Carlton-Demi duo!!”

The accidental plunge into the pool had unexpectedly made Demi and Carlton the center of attention.

Alissa stood by the pool, her gaze icy as she watched Demi. In a single glance, she saw right through Demi's little ploy. Demi was obviously trying to manipulate her and the situation to create attention.

Behind Alissa, Delilah, known for her sweet, innocent persona, quickly sensed Demi's ulterior motives. Pretending to be the victim, playing on sympathy, and having Carlton step in to defend her. Wasn't that the ideal formula for sparking a viral moment?

"Apologize now, Alissa!" Carlton guided Demi safely to the poolside before turning to Alissa, his tone firm and indignant.

Alissa smirked, her tone dripping with disdain. "Keep dreaming if you think I'm going to apologize."

"What did you say?"

"Carlton, I think you've misunderstood Alissa." Delilah stepped forward, her timid demeanor perfectly calibrated as she gazed at Carlton.

A sense of unease crept over Demi as she caught sight of Delilah's demeanor. "I saw the whole thing. It wasn't Alissa's fault. Demi pretended to stumble into the pool, claiming it was Alissa who shoved her, to create drama," Delilah explained, her eyes gleaming with a resolve that suggested she had summoned the courage to expose Demi's ploy.

"What are you talking about?" Demi snapped, her frustration spilling over. "Alissa pushed me! Stop lying!"

"I'm not lying." Delilah shook her head, tears glistening in her eyes. "I saw what transpired. Demi, you staged your fall into the pool to grab attention, not only framing an innocent person but also playing the victim to leverage Carlton for publicity."

Demi froze. A chilling realization struck her as she observed Delilah's trembling voice, reddened eyes, and an expression of heartbreak that seemed even more convincing than her own.

Delilah, too, had mastered the art of pretending to be innocent. And her skills were far more refined. Her act of innocence was seamless, making her appear as a courageous girl fighting for the truth.

“Delilah, stop lying! I was right next to Demi. How could I have seen it wrong?” Carlton shot back, his expression hardening.

Delilah’s eyes filled with tears. “I never wronged her. I’ve said it before. I’m here to show everyone I want to turn over a new leaf. I know telling the truth might upset some people, but for my genuine intentions’ sake, I have to speak out.”

Delilah sniffled, tears sliding down her cheeks at the perfect moment, crafting a gut-wrenching scene. “Demi, I get your desire for fame and attention,” she said, her smile tinged with heartbreak. “I’ve been down that road myself. But after going through it, I learned that stirring up drama and manipulating situations only backfires. I truly believe that if you show people your genuine self, they’ll see your true worth and come to appreciate you.”

“Delilah is really showing a new side of herself!”

Chapter 570:

“Despite her past mistakes, Delilah is brave now.”

“I’m beginning to like her.”

“Demi is so deceitful! I couldn’t figure out how she fell in from so far away. But now, after hearing Delilah’s side, I realized Alissa was pretending, trying to create some drama for attention.”

Delilah’s words had a magnetic pull, swaying the viewers with surprising ease. What had once been support for Demi quickly turned into sharp criticism, as the viewers’ opinions shifted entirely.

Carlton stood there, visibly torn, as confusion clouded his thoughts.

When he observed Delilah's composed and convincing demeanor, he doubted himself. Had Demi truly fallen into the pool on her own?

"Carlton, that's not what happened. She's lying!" Demi's voice trembled as she desperately tried to explain.

But the more she insisted, the less convincing she seemed, her words unraveling as her grip on the situation slipped further away.

Carlton sighed heavily, his shoulders slumping slightly as he turned to Alissa. "I'm sorry for being impulsive earlier."

Alissa shot him a scornful look, her lips curling into a sneer. "Next time you want to play the hero, use your brain."

She shot Delilah a knowing glance before turning on her heel and walking away. Delilah trailed behind Alissa, and as she passed Demi, she gave her a look filled with quiet triumph, as if to say, "You think you can outsmart me? I've already mastered these games."

Rage coursed through Demi's veins as her dreams of stardom crumbled before her eyes. Delilah had swooped in like a vulture, snatching away her one shot at fame.

"Carlton, you don't believe me, do you?" Her voice trembled as she searched his face, her eyes glistening with unshed tears.

Carlton's hesitation spoke volumes. His eyes darted away from her, the silence between them growing heavier with each passing second.

"Alright, I understand." Gathering what remained of her dignity, Demi took a shaky breath. She lifted her chin, forcing a smile. That smile was a masterpiece of heartbreak and resignation. "Thank you for taking care of me these past few days. From now on, let's keep our distance."

"Demi—"

She cut him off with a wave of her hand, turning away before he could see her facade crumble. Her shoulders betrayed her, trembling like autumn leaves in the wind as she fought to contain her emotions. "I hope you find someone you can trust in this show."

The tremor in her voice struck Carlton like a physical blow, making his heart lurch painfully in his chest. Had he made a mistake? But he couldn't tell who was lying.

Carlton inhaled deeply, forcing down the chaos in his mind. He had to remember his purpose here: this wasn't about finding true love; this was his stepping stone to stardom.

Demi remained rooted to the spot before finally willing her feet to move. As she walked away, her mind raced. Surely he would come after her? The growing distance between them answered her question with crushing clarity. Anxiety clawed at her chest.